



# Ballot Initiative STRATEGY CENTER

## Ballot Initiative Overview

2008 Election

### Alaska

Measure 3 was the most notable initiative on the 2008 Primary ballot in Alaska, and it was handily defeated. The "Clean Elections" initiative would have allowed candidates to opt for public funds to finance their campaign, if they agreed to reject private donations. This initiative was conceived as a vehicle for voters to vent their frustrations over the recent public corruption allegations and trials that have tainted Alaskan politics for the past few years.

In response to the Clean Elections Act, members of the state Libertarian party launched the "Anti-Corruption Act" -- an initiative that would among other things ban public financing for political campaigns and prohibit using public money for lobbying purposes. In other words, if both were approved, the two initiatives would have cancelled each other out. While the Clean Elections Act qualified for the August 26 primary ballot, the Anti-Corruption Act won't be on the ballot until 2010.

While the Clean Elections Act was sponsored by Alaskans, the Anti-Corruption Act is being backed by noted, shadowy initiative figures. Former state representative Dick Randolph signed on as chairman of the initiative committee. When asked by the Anchorage Daily News why he agreed to be part of this effort, Randolph remarked that he signed on after being contacted by an old friend, multi-millionaire New York City real estate developer Howie Rich.

Rich is best known as the sponsor of the failed Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) initiatives in 2006. In 2008, Rich moved away from tax fights and is concentrating his efforts on trying to diminish the voices of employees. Rich is one of the primary funders behind the "Open and Clean Government" initiatives in both South Dakota and Colorado. Open and Clean Government prohibits political contributions by labor unions that have collective bargaining agreements with state or local governments but is silent about corporate gifts to elected officials and ignores most contributions by large and out-of-state corporations. These two initiatives served as the model for Alaska's Anti-Corruption Act.

When the Anchorage Daily News attempted to clarify Rich's involvement in the Anti-Corruption Act, Scott Kohlaas a Libertarian working on the initiative said, "I can tell you he sent me an e-mail telling me not to 'eff' this up."

One measure was on the statewide ballot and passed; it was a legislative referenda.

### **1 Statutory Initiative Was Referred**

#### **General Ballot Measure 1: Bond**

G.O. Bonds for Transportation Projects. Shall the State of Alaska issue its general obligation bonds in the principal amount of not more than \$315,050,000 for the purpose of paying the cost of state transportation projects?

PASSED 62.5% - 37.5%

*For additional information please check with the Alaska Secretary of State:*

*<http://ltgov.state.ak.us/elections/>*